Watershed Conservation Strategies
TLC Mission

TLC strives to create a healthier and more vibrant Triangle region by safeguarding clean water, protecting natural habitats, supporting local farms and food, and connecting people with nature through land protection and stewardship, catalyzing community action, and collaboration.
TLC Water Goal

By 2025

Triangle Land Conservancy will permanently protect and steward 25,000 acres, doubling the pace of conservation across the Triangle.
Safeguarding Clean Water

WHERE WE'VE BEEN

The Watershed Protection program, founded primarily by the City of Raleigh, has been successfully safeguarding drinking water for the Triangle since 2000. The Upper Neuse watershed represents 770 square miles, 6 counties, 6 municipalities, 6 public water drinking systems, and a water supply comprising 34,000 acres of land and 100 miles of stream. Each year these efforts are estimated to have removed 1,130 pounds of nitrogen and 720 pounds of phosphorus from entering Raleigh’s drinking water supply.

WHERE WE'RE GOING

Priority lands in the Neuse River and Upper Cape Fear/Jordan Lake watersheds will be identified and permanently protected through increased funding and financing mechanisms.

HOW WE'LL GET THERE

Draft, design, and develop an Upper Cape Fear Conservation Plan to replicate the Watershed Protection Program in coordination with the Triangle J Council of Governments, local governments, and other nonprofit partners to protect an additional 2,000 acres of land in the Cape Fear Basin with regional partners.

increase advocacy efforts in coalition with other conservation groups to support North Carolina’s Clean Water Management Trust Fund, Parks and Recreational Trust Fund, and Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund.
Upper Neuse Watershed: How it works

- WPP provides implementation support to partner organization
- Partners conduct landowner outreach
- Screen potential projects using the watershed protection model
- Partners submit an application
- Independent review board with representatives from across the watershed review projects (administered by TJCOG)
- Approved projects are taken forward to Council for final approval
Why it works….

- FOREST CONSERVATION AS A NUTRIENT CREDIT IN THE JORDAN LAKE WATERSHED

- Charles C. Stillwell, Jeffrey P. Johnson, William F. Hunt Department of Biological & Agricultural Engineering North Carolina State University.

- Land conservation easements and land retirement have a nitrogen reduction efficiency of 83% and phosphorus reduction efficiency of 56%, and that such programs have a cost of $6-$110 per acre per year.

*Minnesota’s Nutrient Reduction Strategy
JLOW and the Conservation Strategy

2017, Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) began holding meetings to discuss One Water management concepts in the Jordan Lake watershed.

2018 Established a partnership to facilitate cooperation and integrated water resource management.

2018- TLC and TJCOG secured grant for conservation strategy.

2019 Establish Advisory group and more formal partnership.

December 2019- UNC Collaborative.

June 2021 Recommendations go to NCDWR.
70% of watershed lands comprised of farms, fields, wetlands & forests.
Water Sources & Conveyances
- Protect Headwater Streams
- Support Connected High Quality Water Features
- Protect Riparian Areas

Uplands
- Protect Uplands and Pervious Areas
- Protect Areas with Minimal Impervious Surface
- Protect Uplands with Forest Cover

Infiltration & Retention
- Promote Infiltration and Retention through Wetland Protection
- Promote Filtration through Floodplain Protection
- Protect Groundwater Recharge Areas

Vulnerable Areas
- Protect Wet / Hydric Areas
- Protect Steep Slopes
- Protect Highly Erodible Soils
Keys to success:
• Identify a champion
• Engage both staff and elected leaders in the process
• Develop models that align with funding
• Recognize / quantify the additional benefits
• Highlight partners

$0.66
Average fee per Month
(Less than the cost of a water bottle)

700,000
Customers
(approximately)

$24+ Million
Annually
Projected funds for conservation
Obstacles:
• Data related to nutrient avoidance
• Regulatory and non-regulatory projects
• Decline of match funding
• Changes in leadership/priorities
• Water Infrastructure needs and competing projects

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